

## **Nutrition Services**

### **Texas Department of State Health Services**

Effective August 1, 2009

Policy FD: 02.0

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#### **Frequency of Issuance of Food Benefits**

##### **Purpose**

To provide a uniform procedure for issuing WIC benefits to participants, ensuring adequate nutrition education (NE) opportunities, and preserving coordination with other health services such as immunizations and prenatal care.

##### **Authority**

7 CFR Part 246.12

##### **Policy**

Local agencies (LAs) shall implement a benefits issuance/nutrition education routine for all participants that meets the educational and follow-up needs of the participant not to exceed each participant's total food entitlement within his/her certification period. No more than three months of food benefits can be issued at one time. The WIC Lone Star Card may hold the current months issuance plus the next 3 month's issuance. Food for all participants within the family will be aggregated on the card.

##### **Procedures**

- I. As part of the annual LA NE Plan, the LA shall describe the standard frequency of issuance for each category of participants not to exceed the maximum allowed.
- II. LAs shall meet the minimum federal requirements of two NE contacts within a certification period, either with individual counseling or group classes.

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- III. The Certifying Authority shall determine individual participants who would benefit from frequent NE contacts such as: pregnant women who enter WIC late in pregnancy or individuals with high risk conditions who require individual nutrition counseling and adjust the issuance length accordingly.
- IV. If a family member's certification expires during the current month, but the family member is eligible for subsequent certification, the system will advance issue a single month's benefits to other family members after the month certification expires. If the family member is subsequently certified for the following month, up to three months issuance will resume. If any family member becomes categorically ineligible (woman attaining six month postpartum or one year breastfeeding or child turning five years old), the other family members shall still receive full advance issuance.
- V. Failure to pick up benefits:
  - A. The WIN system shall automatically inactivate participants who fail to pick up benefits for two (2) consecutive months.
  - B. LAs shall reactivate, if caseload permits, participants who return before their certification period expires.
  - C. If the participant fails to return for subsequent certification, then the record will be automatically terminated for Failure to Subcertify.

### **Guidelines**

To change the frequency of issuance of benefits in the Texas WIN system, refer to "Issuing Frequency" in the Texas WIN EBT Quick Guide for Clinics.